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Reconstructing the Crippled Soldier

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ADDITIONAL copies of this pamphlet may be obtained without charge upon application to the Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men, 311 Fourth Avenue, New York City. The Institute is also prepared to furnish specific information on the organization and method of re-educational work in the various belligerent countries, as well as on the technique of training and employment for industrial cripples. Correspondence with interested individuals or associations is invited.

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RECONSTRUCTING THE CRIPPLED SOLDIER

I

MORE than one new conception of social responsibility have come into being by reason of the war. Perhaps the one of greatest consequence for the future is the new attitude toward the war cripple—a human waste product at last coming to be utilized. The disabled hero of past campaigns, fortified alone by a Victoria Cross or some other badge of honor, was awarded a niggardly pension on which he could not live, and left to a life of idleness and dependence, if not of mendicancy. About the best the crippled soldier could hope for in the way of employment was a job as doorman, night watchman, or street vendor.

“Soldiers, your labors, your privations, your sufferings, and your valor will never be forgotten by a grateful country,” said Sir Henry Havelock to the gallant troops that saved India to England. But in the light of subsequent experience the recollection of those words must have made them sound like mockery. Yet Havelock was sincere, and all nations on the eve of victory express a like intention—which is forgotten in the coming years of peace, industrial preoccupation, and national self-satisfaction.

In the past, nations may have been able to afford the support in idleness of thousands of crippled and disabled men, but in the present need of every possible unit of productivity, this is no longer the case. And the return to useful labor benefits the cripple even more than it does the state. Though a disabled man

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*With one arm gone, this French soldier
has been refitted for self-support*



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may be prevented by his handicap from returning to the occupation in which he was previously employed, it has been found that even the most seriously crippled can be trained for other trades, at which they can earn the full standard wage. The soldier who has lost a leg must be prepared for a job in which hands and arms are the principal requirements; the man who lacks an arm must be fitted for a position in which the use of a single hand suffices. It is entirely possible to choose work suited to the individual disabilities, though the choice is an expert matter indeed.

This process of training adults for a new trade the French have termed "re-education," and the word was so expressive that it was immediately adopted by the British and Italians, and bids fair soon to become familiar on this side of the Atlantic.

When the soldier comes through an amputation operation he is in a state of pretty complete discouragement regarding his future. When he finds that he has still something ahead of him, that he can even go back to a regular job, the transformation is amazing. "Recalled to life" is the phrase used by the English pensions ministry in describing the process.

In the future cripples will be considered in a different light than in the past—no longer as helpless, but as able—though their handicap may require careful selection of the occupation in which they are to engage and, perhaps, some special training preparatory to it. In the light of the demonstrated possibilities one European writer puts it strikingly, "There are no more cripples!"

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The British Minister of Pensions addressing over four hundred limbless men at Brighton, England

The vast numbers of men engaged in hostilities during the present war make for a proportionately large number of the crippled. For example, there are in Great Britain today over 35,000 amputation cases, and these represent but one type of those permanently disabled. There are, in addition, the men with severe rheumatism, paralysis, shattered muscles, stiff joints, and the like. In one hospital in Toronto there are at any one time four hundred men with arm or leg amputations being fitted with artificial limbs. At Brighton, England, there is a hospital housing even a greater number of limbless soldiers.

Official statistics on casualties in the present war are still meager, but conservative computations based on existing data show that a force of one million men in

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the field for one year may be expected to yield 30,000 of its members permanently disabled.

II

A few years prior to the war the authorities of the Belgian province of Hainaut decided that men crippled in industrial accidents should not be supported in idleness if they could be so trained as to restore their productive capacity. So they established in Charleroi a trade school for maimed men. The institution was wisely planned and the results of its work were successful. As everyone knows, Charleroi lay right in the path of the German invasion. But the destruction of the school and the scattering of its teachers and pupils served only to disseminate the seed of its principles and experience.

The director of the Charleroi school, M. Azer Basèque, turned up at Lyons, in France, just about the time the mayor of that city was trying to reconcile the desperate local need for labor with the number of returned soldiers, lacking an arm or leg but otherwise healthy and strong, who were sunning themselves in the streets and waiting for something to turn up. These men could not be found jobs, because they were not trained for those which their physical handicap would permit them to fill.

The Mayor of Lyons, M. Édouard Herriot, is one of the most picturesque figures in France. Besides his municipal office, he is the youngest member of the national senate. With the needs of the maimed soldiers on his mind, he found at hand the formula to solve the problem. With M. Basèque of Charleroi as

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*A farmer, crippled in the war, ready
to go back to his former work*

an expert ally, he founded the first French training school for war cripples. This institution, now known as the "École Joffre," has since become famous; its example and success have stimulated the foundation of many similar schools in other cities throughout France. Its growth has been steady, and the school now has an agricultural branch at Tourvielle, a suburb of Lyons.

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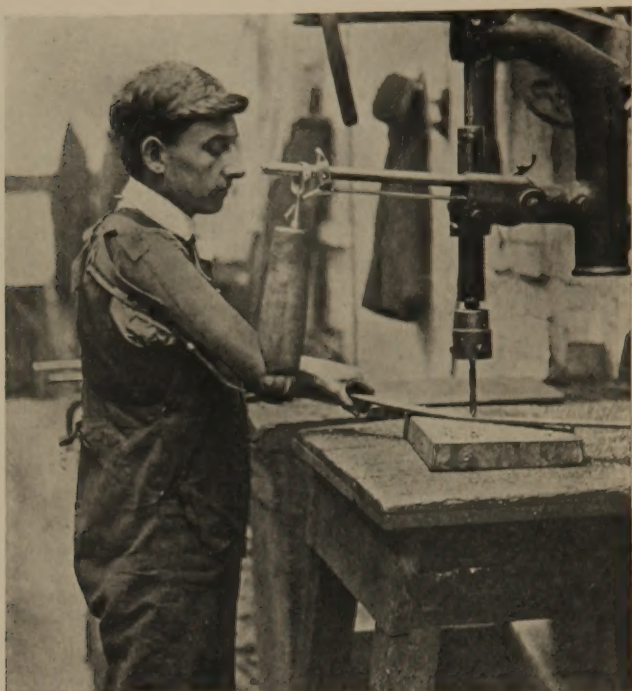
The crippled soldier was fortunate in enlisting in his cause another eminent advocate. Maurice Barrès, one of the most distinguished literary men of France, threw himself heart and soul into the work, and effected the organization at Paris of a federation in the interests of disabled men. Professor Jules Amar, one of the nation's leading scientists, applied himself to improve artificial limbs to replace lost ones, and to devise accurate methods of testing the working capacities of injured men.

The start having been made, progress was rapid and there are now over a hundred French centers of re-education.

The Belgians must needs found on foreign soil their institutions for crippled soldiers; the principal one is located at Port-Villez in France. To the establishment of this school still another official of the pioneer institute at Charleroi was able to contribute. At Port-Villez not only are disabled soldiers trained to proficiency in new trades, but the school, in the course of its operation, produces enough supplies for the Belgian army to make the enterprise self-supporting.

In England the Soldiers and Sailors Help Society, which had been at work since the South African war, instituted the "Lord Roberts Fund" for the establishment throughout the country of workshops in which disabled soldiers could be trained and employed. Some public-spirited citizens, struck by the time wasted by convalescent men in two great military hospitals at Roehampton and Brighton, established in conjunction with these institutions the Queen Mary Workshops for training the soldiers in new

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*A crippled British soldier at a London "technical institute,"
preparing to work on submarine fittings*

trades. The subjects range from leather work to diamond cutting.

The principal contribution to the training system for British crippled soldiers, however, is being made by the trade schools, or "technical institutes" as the English call them. These schools have established for disabled men special classes in a great variety of subjects. It has been found impractical to put the discharged

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*Entrance to the agricultural school for French war cripples,
established in France by the American Red Cross*

soldiers in the same classes with regular pupils of the institutes, for the reason that the men are mortified at going to school with a class of boys, and are ashamed when they do not catch on as quickly as the younger learners. But the situation is met perfectly by a separate class, in which is utilized the existing equipment of the institute.

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An Italian crippled soldier being trained for secretarial work

In Italy the re-education of disabled soldiers is principally agricultural, due to the large proportion of peasants in the national army. Training schools, operating in conjunction with hospitals, were established in various cities, notably in Rome, Turin, Milan, Venice, and Palermo. The German provision is varied in character. Some hospitals have established training schools of their own, as at Nuremberg and Berlin. In other cities a central trade school provides instruction for convalescent soldiers resident in several local hospitals as, for example, at Düsseldorf. Placement is attended to by the national system of labor exchanges, and the general after-care is supposed to be provided by local committees.

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Early in the war there was constituted in Canada the Military Hospitals Commission, a body charged with responsibility for all phases of rehabilitation of disabled soldiers. At some points the Commission has built training shops in connection with convalescent hospitals; at others it provides instruction in cooperation with provincial or local trade schools, agricultural colleges, or the Y. M. C. A. Re-education has reached its greatest efficiency in the west, and notably in Alberta, this being largely accounted for by an early start at the job. So many of the early enlistments were from the west that, in consequence, the first contingents of disabled men returned to the same section.



*Plowing virgin prairie in Alberta — a training course
in tractor operation*

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In Australia, the Repatriation Commission looks out for the interests of crippled soldiers. Many are placed for training in factories, the state paying the discrepancy between the minimum wage in the trade and the man's productive value to his employer. In New Zealand there has been established a special department of the government to care for the employment of disabled soldiers. Some training facilities are provided, but the labor demand is so great that it has been possible to place directly most of the returned men. And India also is considering facilities for her maimed fighters, one school having been already established at Bombay.

III

Now, just what course is followed in dealing with the crippled soldier in order to "put on his feet" again the man whose limbs were lost in the war?

The first feature of the job devolves on the surgeon, who must conserve in the greatest possible degree the man's working capacity, restore the flexibility of stiff joints, and turn the soldier out of the hospital in good general health. Occupation is one of the best curative agents the surgeon has at his disposal, so now every well-equipped base hospital counts a workshop as an essential item of its equipment. But when the surgeon has done all within his power, many men will still remain permanently disabled. The medical man can heal a stump, but he cannot grow a new limb to replace one that has been amputated.

But there can be provided an artificial substitute, and it is surprising how nearly human some of these

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*While still in bed, occupation is an agent
of great curative value*

mechanical limbs become. A natural arm is operated by muscles which pull tendons as they contract and release. Now the muscles need not be those of the arm itself. Those of the shoulders, back, and chest can be made to operate the arm if the proper connections are made. So in the complicated modern arms steel wires or rawhide cords act as tendons, linking up fingers, wrist, and elbow with a new muscular combination. Reactions are provided for by springs. We thus have the phenomenon of a man with two artificial arms acting as a clerk or bookkeeper.

Such mechanical marvels are useful to men in certain lines only. If furnished to the average trade worker, he becomes impatient with their intricacies and abandons their use, preferring to get along without as best

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he can. The same comment applies to artificial legs. Many workmen prefer to use daily in the shop the simple "peg and bucket" leg. The more elaborate imitation of their lost limb is reserved for walking out on Sundays. So the wiser European schools provide one of each type—an every-day leg and a dress leg.

The working arm for practical use bears to a natural arm no resemblance whatever. It consists merely of a chuck secured to the stump. In this chuck may be grasped interchangeably a variety of tools, chosen according to the particular trade in which the man is to engage. The chuck contrivance is called by the surgeons a "working prosthesis."



The working arm is designed for practical ends—not for appearance

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*Italian soldiers at Naples learning to walk—
for the second time*

In Germany, though both engineers and medical men were working on the design of artificial limbs, the best arm was invented by a simple but practical peasant who had himself suffered amputation. In this line, experience seems to count for more than theory.

After a cripple has been equipped with new limbs he must learn to use them. Learning to walk—for the second time—is a primary necessity. Soldiers with artificial arms and arm appliances must learn to oper-

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ate them with facility. Then the men who have lost their right arm must be trained to write and work with their left one. Left-handed classes are a familiar sight in the European schools. The pupils quickly become deft with what seemed at first to them a hopelessly clumsy member.



*A poilu fitted with temporary peg legs
soon after amputation*

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From this point on the responsibility for the soldier's future shifts to experts in social service, industrial training, and employment. The success of this work depends on personal contact and influence; it cannot be done wholesale. One must gain the friendship and confidence of the soldier, for there are many obstacles which must be overcome. This is costly, for it requires advisers of no mean personal caliber. Where there is being made a signal success in the re-education of war cripples, there will be found a director of wide sympathy, boundless tact, and infinite patience.

An active man who suddenly becomes permanently disabled is very naturally in a state of discouragement, and he is making up his mind, as philosophically as may be, to a life of enforced idleness. This notion must be disposed of, and the soldier convinced that he will again become useful and productive. The records of other men similarly handicapped who have been successful in spite of their disability are a great help toward this end. The British Pensions Ministry distributes to wounded soldiers a booklet made up of statements by crippled soldiers who, after a course of training, are profitably employed. The Germans are issuing a three-volume work comprising autobiographies of cripples who have made good.

No one can be so helpful to a cripple as another cripple. At the Heritage Crafts School at Chailey, England, there have been successfully trained for some years deformed boys and girls from the London slums. This picturesque institution has now been thrown open to war cripples. As the disabled man arrives, despondent over his future, he is given as an

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Co-education of crippled boys and crippled soldiers

"orderly" a boy similarly crippled. His young assistant soon gives vivid demonstration that physical disability does not mean uselessness—that it is, in fact, not as bad as it seems. Mrs. C. W. Kimmins, the devoted founder and director of the school, calls this "co-education of crippled boys and crippled soldiers," and vouches for the results of this system. In the great school of re-education at Düsseldorf, Germany, most of the teachers are themselves crippled. The pupils are thus deprived of the excuse that, being handicapped, a given process is impossible, for the instructor will promptly demonstrate to the contrary.

Then there is the matter of character, and in this the force of personal influence is the sole reliance. There

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are two attitudes the man may take. One is that he has done his duty by his country, been seriously crippled in its performance, and, therefore, it is incumbent on the government to support him for the rest of his days—it would be an outrage to expect a disabled hero to go out again to toil for his daily bread! As no pension is adequate to live on, this means at least partial dependence either upon relatives or the community. The second attitude is that he must continue to do his full duty to his country “as befitting a soldier and a man;” that he will make an earnest effort to fit himself for a position of independence and self-support.

He must be influenced to make for himself this latter decision, and in the great majority of cases, he can be brought to do so. And his family must be converted as well—persuaded that time spent now in thorough preparation will pay in the long run. In the United States, this family influence will probably be exerted by the home service visitors of the Red Cross.

A good many people who have not had actual experience in dealing with cripples have glibly advanced a proposal that the disabled soldier should be given no choice as to whether or not he should undertake training. Retain him under military discipline, they say, and assign him to attend trade school as he would be assigned to sentry duty. Such a theory is nothing short of pernicious and, if put in practice, would end in confusion. While a soldier may submit to be ordered to a classroom, no authority in the world can make him receptive to the instruction or interested in the subject. In fact, compulsion would effect just the opposite result. Then, again, public opinion,

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always at an emotional stage as the returned men begin to arrive from the front, will not tolerate such a course. The public takes the attitude—and the soldiers themselves second it—that though men have enlisted for military service to defend their country, they have not enlisted for compulsory trade school attendance, and that upon returning from the front, disabled and weary, they should at least have the right to go back home to their families. Another inducement to early discharge from the army lies in the multitude of temporary but lucrative jobs available during the abnormal industrial boom consequent on a state of war.

Though the voice of authority, however, is impotent, persuasion, backed by the right type of personal influence, will accomplish the desired end.



A tailoring class of crippled men being trained by a crippled teacher

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*Some men prefer to work with their stump
and abandon any artificial appliance*

At Calgary, in the Province of Alberta, Canada, the vocational officers in charge of the re-educational work have been signally successful in their dealings with the men. They treat with the soldiers as equals—no more and no less—and they seem to have established a relation quite different from that possible between an

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enlisted man and his superior officer. To them a private is not "Jackson" but "*Mr. Jackson.*" They make friends with a soldier while he is still convalescent; discuss with him his worries, and help to plan his future. They show him two alternatives. The one a temporary job at good wages, and later the insecure prospect of unskilled and casual employment; the other a short period of some sacrifice during the course of study, but an assured and satisfactory future for himself and his family. Men who make the right choice and make it deliberately enter on their training with enthusiasm. At Calgary, under this type of influence, ninety-five per cent. of the crippled soldiers who, it was thought, would profit by re-education, have voluntarily elected it as a privilege rather than submitted to it as a chore.

Once the soldier has made the decision to "carry on" and still play a man's part, it is decidedly incumbent on the authorities to see that the training offered him is first-class in every particular, that the trades are wisely selected, the course thorough, and the instructors competent.

What trades should be taught the war cripple? The first requirement is that they be trades in which the local employment possibilities are good and in which there is a definite demand for a greater number of skilled operatives; that they be not seasonal trades; that they be growing rather than on the wane; and that the wage standards be satisfactory. Within the limits thus established, the choice of trade for the individual must be based on his own preference, talent, and past experience. Of course, some trades cannot be

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A blacksmithing class for war cripples in Paris

considered, as the soldier is disqualified by his handicap from pursuing them, but for any given disability there are a thousand possible jobs to choose from. The best trades for crippled soldiers are not necessarily the most obvious, and a special effort should be made to develop some not taught in the standard trade schools.

Of the individual factors, past experience is the most important. The education of the adult consists principally of his working experience; it should not, therefore, be thrown away, but should be conserved and built upon. It would be silly to train a crippled farmer as a watchmaker, when he can be taught the operation of agricultural tractors; to instruct a railroad brakeman in machine tool work when he can learn telegraphy and still hold a railway job. Some men can be raised a grade or two in their own trades. A com-

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petent bricklayer who has lost a leg may, after a thorough course in architectural drafting and the interpretation of plans, become a job foreman or an inspector of construction.

These instances, however, concern only men who were, previous to their enlistment, operatives in the skilled trades. Their problems are the simplest of solution. But in the present war, when not only professional soldiers but whole nations are in arms, there will return disabled many young men who had not yet attained a permanent industrial status. Some will have entered the army direct from high school or college, others will have been migratory workers who



One arm amputated, but training to be a lathe operator, Montpellier, France

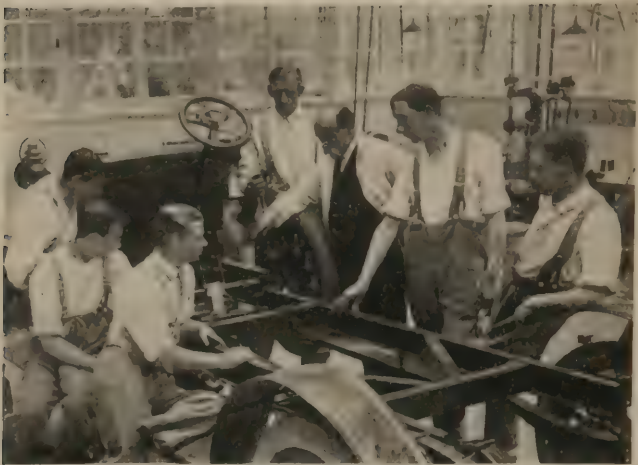
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had not yet found a permanent niche and whose experience has been too varied to be of much value, still others will have been drawn from unskilled and ill-paid occupations which hold little future opportunity for the able-bodied worker, and almost none for the physically handicapped. Among the latter will be found those who have been forced to leave school and go to work at too early an age, and to whom the community has not given a fair chance. When they now return from the front crippled for life and having made a great patriotic sacrifice, it is surely the duty of the state to repair so far as practicable the former inequality of opportunity. It would be a cause for national pride if, in the future, such men could date their economic success from the amputation of their limb lost in their country's service. And this is entirely within the realms of probability.

IV

In actual practice the most popular trade being taught to crippled soldiers is "motor mechanics," that is the operation and repair of automobile engines. Too popular, the school directors think it, for almost every man asked to express his preference as to subject elects to train as a motor mechanic. There could be no better proof that the automobile still has glamour in the public eye. The work manifestly appeals to the men's imaginations and they want to go into it whether their ability lies in that direction or not. So the job of the vocational director is to dissuade many from this first and universal choice. Otherwise, according to one authority, "all the disabled soldiers in Canada would

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A class in motor mechanics at Queen Mary's Workshop, Roehampton, England

be garage workers," and there would, of course, be available employment for but a few of them.

The aim of the courses is to train repair men for garages rather than chauffeurs. The British pensions officials have issued a specific warning against the training of disabled men for automobile drivers for the reason that, after the war, there will be released from the motor transport service, to seek civilian employment, thousands of men highly skilled for just this work.

A specialized branch of automobile mechanics is the operation of agricultural tractors, an infant branch of the motor industry, but a growing one. Geographical influences determine this specialization. Whereas a motor class in Montreal will work with commercial

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trucks and pleasure cars, a similar class in a western province of Canada will take its training on farm tractors.

The various branches of electrical work offer another good field of instruction. In London the Institution of Electrical Engineers, in cooperation with Northampton Institute, arranged courses to train switchboard attendants for electric power houses, the classes being open free to disabled soldiers. At other points in England war cripples are taught armature winding, magneto assembling, inside electrical wiring, and general repair work. In Germany there is electrical training at various centers, notably at the great school in Düsseldorf. There is little instructional work along this line in France.

Electrical trades have the advantage of great industrial stability. They are growing steadily, the wages are good, and the employment not subject to seasonal fluctuation.

To pass to a subject of another kind, cobbling has been found a good trade to teach a certain type of man. It is especially suitable for leg cripples. In large cities a reasonable number of men can be placed in shoe repairing shops, but in the smaller communities and in the rural districts the returned soldier can set up business for himself and build up a good trade. The required mechanical equipment is simple, and can be rented rather than purchased outright. This subject is taught in practically every country providing vocational re-education, but is particularly popular in France where it is represented at Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Cherbourg, Havre, Limoges, Mont-

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pellier, Rouen, Toulouse, and at dozens of smaller centers throughout the country. Some of the French cripples combine with cobbling the repair of sandals and wooden sabots.

The making of artificial limbs and orthopedic appliances has been found a good trade in which to instruct war cripples, and it is certainly as appropriate a line as any in which a maimed man could engage. This fitness is more than theoretical for most of the leg makers today are men who are themselves minus one or both of their lower limbs.

The number of trades being taught is legion. Their choice is usually dictated by the labor needs of the communities in which the particular school is located.



Class in making of artificial limbs, Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men, New York

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*With two arms gone, this French soldier is ready
to return and work his farm*

Among the others which have found fairly general adoption are tailoring, printing, telegraphy, machine tool work, sheet metal work, and toy-making.

It will be surprising to some that for even badly disabled agricultural workers, the best chance has been

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found to be still on the farm. Those who have lost limbs are fitted with special appliances for the work they are to do. Artificial legs are made with extra large feet so as not to sink into soft ground; arm stumps are fitted with devices to hold the reins of a horse, with a hook to grasp a plow handle, or with a grip with which to turn a cream separator.

From the viewpoint of national economy it is important to keep on the land every skilled agricultural worker. In France there is a special propaganda to this end; in England the local committees make every effort not only to keep farmers in the same work, but also to place in agriculture other suitable men. Canada, Australia, and Great Britain are offering returned soldiers special inducements to land settlement. The Canadian offer, in addition to a sufficient tract, includes the loan of enough money to build a house and start agricultural operations.

Still another branch of training embraces commercial and allied subjects. Every country at war has provided that crippled soldiers shall have preference in appointments to civil service positions. This is a wise arrangement, for it is logical that the nation should offer opportunity in its own employment to men disabled in its service. To the classes in civil service preparation many of the one-armed men can be assigned. In Canada, for example, the jobs in prospect are mostly in the postal and revenue departments, and the instruction covers arithmetic, spelling, simple composition, elementary accounting, and commercial geography. Other men who have the requisite mental

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*In training as an accountant, in spite
of the loss of two arms*

qualifications can be trained as bookkeepers and clerks.

The men in the trade classes in a school profit also by the instruction in arithmetic, spelling, and composition. It has been found advisable, simultaneous with their industrial training, to have most of the pupils brush up on the elementary subjects. Mechanic-

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cal drafting is another subject supplementary to the majority of the trade courses. Some of the men can make drafting their specialty, and prepare for positions as assistants in the offices of architects and engineers.

It is imperative that the training of disabled soldiers be absolutely thorough. The courses must be too long rather than too short. A crippled man must be amply prepared for the job he will try to hold down. He will have difficulties enough with which to contend without the added handicap of insufficient training. For the same reason, the experience during the course should duplicate, so far as possible, the conditions and difficulties met with in actual employment. Re-educating a disabled adult is a different proposition from the trade preparation of an apprentice boy. Crippled soldiers as a class, and the rehabilitation system, must not be discredited by slipshod and superficial methods of instruction.

V

When the training of the crippled soldier is completed there remains the task of finding him a suitable job. This will be easy or difficult in direct proportion to the thoroughness of his training. But even if easy, the placement should be made with intelligence and discretion; it is, in fact, a highly expert job. For the man returned from the front the first job is easy to secure—so easy that we should not be misled by superficial indications. The employer is patriotic and anxious to help the crippled soldiers. But when the war shall have been over a few years, these motives

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will be no longer effective. The man taken on in a time of national stress will be just one of the employees, and his retention in service will depend upon performance alone. If the original placement was sound and the man was able from the beginning to return for



Some men must be fitted to go back to manual work

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his wages value received, he will have made progress, gained confidence and experience, and made his position sure. If, on the other hand, he was incompetent or ill-fitted for his job, he will have grown progressively less efficient and in consequence discouraged, and his status will be precarious indeed. A permanent injury might thus result from an employment bungle in the first instance.

VI

In all branches of the rehabilitation process, the attitude of the public can do much to help or hinder. The man returning disabled from the front deserves the whole-hearted gratitude and respect of the nation, but to spoil and pamper him is an ill-advised way of meeting the obligation. In one of the allied countries the wife of a returned soldier complained to the representative of a patriotic relief agency, which had been attending to the family needs while the chief breadwinner was at the front, that her husband would never spend any time with her or with the children. She had wanted that afternoon to have him accompany them to the park, but he disdainfully refused, saying that he was going out for an automobile ride and later to a "sing-song" at one of the fashionable hotels. The musical entertainment referred to was being provided by the society ladies of the city, so mother and the children went to the park alone, while the "hero" was receiving appropriate recognition of his services.

Treating the disabled soldier at the corner saloon—in districts where there are any saloons—is, of course, the most dangerous form of hospitality. In some cities

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*A one-armed South African operates the typewriter
shift key by a foot pedal*

the "patriotic" hysteria of the public has been such that neither the police nor the military authorities are in a position to restrain or punish returned soldiers, even when they have become seriously disorderly and objectionable. This is no kindness to the men and casts a most unfavorable reflection on the service as a whole.

On the other hand, the nation cannot go too far in showing gratitude to the war cripple, provided the manner of its expression is sound. The real duty is not so simple of fulfillment as the mere provision of

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social entertainment. The one form of expression should be frowned upon as actually unpatriotic; the other should be promoted and encouraged.

Crippled men testify unanimously that the "handicap of public opinion" has been to them a greater obstacle than the loss of a limb. People have assumed them helpless and, only too often, have persuaded them to become so. Idleness is the calamity too great to be borne. We must, therefore, find for the cripple the kind of a job for which he is capable, and see that the community influence encourages him to tackle it. If we demand that the disabled man get back in the work of the world, we shall find him only too ready to do so.

For the cripple who is occupied is, in truth, no longer handicapped.

VII

Where lies the responsibility for re-educating the crippled soldier? Although experience of the various countries regarding principles and methods of training has been practically coincident, no two systems of administration are the same. The French re-educational centers were organized by private philanthropy, municipal or departmental authorities, or cooperatively by several interests. Some of the schools have obtained grants from the national government. From the beginning, at least three federal departments were concerned with the work, and there was considerable conflict of scope. There has now been constituted a national committee to standardize the local work so far as possible, but it has not authority to enforce its

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rulings, and as it does not provide support has no control of funds. Although French work is for the most part of high standard, there is no guarantee to this effect as regards any specific school, and a crippled soldier in one locality may get a training greatly inferior to that offered his colleague in another district.

In Great Britain the system has undergone a drastic revision since the beginning of the war. In rough approximation it would be fair to say that during the first year of the war the disabled soldier was dependent wholly on charity; the second year half on philanthropy and half on the state; and the third year the entire burden was assumed by the nation. It was found in actual—and in some ways bitter—experience that the duty was a national one and could be satisfactorily discharged in no other way.

The schools in Italy were organized by local effort, but were soon coordinated under a national committee. The central government makes grants for the maintenance of soldiers under instruction in the schools. Germany likewise has what might be called the half and half system. The establishment of re-educational institutions depends on private initiative, the war office making per capita grants for the military cripple under training. There is on paper an organization of local committees, but their operation has not proved satisfactory. In this field the vaunted German efficiency is not evident.

Except for Belgium, all activities of which are necessarily nationalized, Canada is the only one of the belligerents who from the first recognized the national responsibility to her disabled soldiers. This should be

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recorded to the great credit of our neighbor to the north. From the first year of the war no Canadian soldier has had need to depend on charity for his convalescent care or industrial training.

VIII

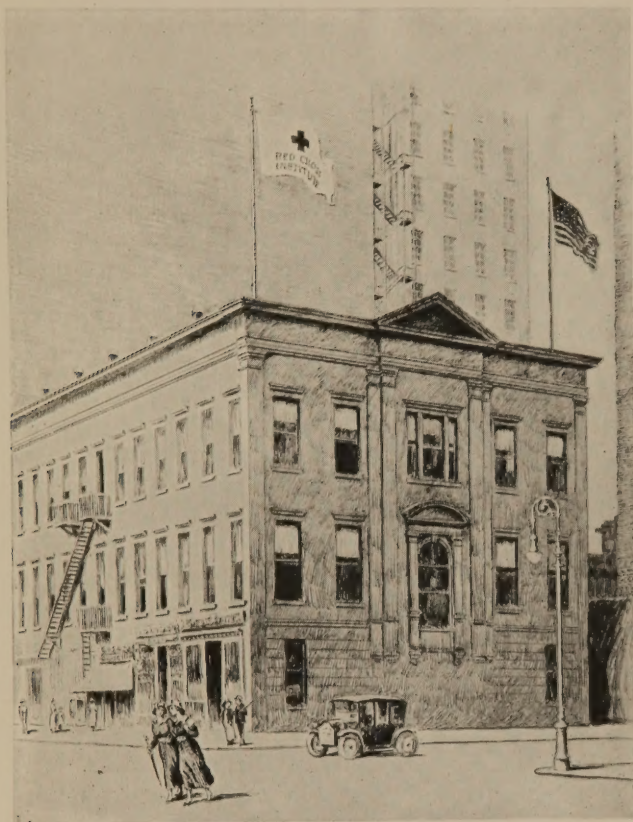
The United States is now concerned in making provision for the men of its own forces who may be crippled in action. It is a matter in which we should be forehanded, for the time to prepare training facilities is not when the disabled men have actually returned. With the experience of the other countries before us, we can consider our work creditable, not by equalling, but only by excelling the results already accomplished elsewhere.

Already the national authorities have gone on record as accepting without reservation responsibility for the after-care of men injured in the service. The Surgeon-General's Office of the War Department is now preparing to provide for wounded men, not only medical and surgical care, but also the curative advantages afforded by the simpler forms of occupation. The government is further inaugurating vocational training having as its object rehabilitation for self-support.

For some types of vocational training there will be enlisted the cooperation of already established trade, agricultural, and commercial schools, which will organize special classes for crippled soldiers.

There has recently been established in New York, through the gift of Jeremiah Milbank, the Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men, the first specialized trade school in the United States for handi-

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*The Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men
at 311 Fourth Avenue, New York*

capped men. At this institution classes in the making of artificial limbs, oxy-acetylene welding, printing, and mechanical drafting are already under way, and

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an employment bureau has been in operation for several months.

Committees to assist in the work of the government have been organized in Chicago, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other cities. A fraternal order is building at Boston, as a gift to the national authorities, a great reconstruction hospital. The government is disposed to make use of, under due supervision, such private assistance as may be offered and found of value. Cooperative arrangements are logical, for it would be unwise at the present time to attempt new construction where existing facilities can be made to serve. But in every instance the expense of instruction will be met by the government, so that the disabled American soldier will in no wise be dependent on charity. The fundamental responsibility remains national.

To such a program every American can heartily subscribe. And in its execution he must assist. The employers in their spirit of patriotism must give the returned man, not an easy berth, but a chance at a constructive job in which he can grow. The trade workers must suggest jobs in their own line which physically handicapped men can fill, and advise regarding the best methods of instruction to prepare for them. The individual citizen must help by his attitude to encourage the crippled soldier to the privilege of self-support rather than to the ignominy of dependence.

America may have some physical cripples returned from the front, but she must have no social or economic cripples resulting from her participation in this war for justice and humanity.

